

RELEASED TEST ITEMS

Sample Student Work
Illustrating LEAP Achievement Levels

Fall 2008

Social Studies



Louisiana Department of
EDUCATION

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Grade

8

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This public document was published at a cost of \$248. One hundred and fifty (150) copies of this document were printed in this first printing at a cost of \$248. The total cost for the printing of this document, including reprints, was \$248. This document was published for the Louisiana Department of Education, Office of Student and School Performance, Division of Assessments and Accountability, PO Box 94064, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064, by Data Recognition Corporation, 13490 Bass Lake Road, Maple Grove, MN 55311. This material was printed in accordance with the standards for printing by State Agencies established pursuant to R.S. 43:31.

Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP)
GRADE 8 SAMPLE ITEMS AND STUDENT WORK
2007–2008

LEAP is an integral part of the Louisiana school and district accountability system passed by the state legislature and signed into law in 1997. The primary purposes of the accountability system are to raise expectations for achievement for all Louisiana public school students and to improve public education in the state.

In March 2008, grade 8 students took LEAP English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies tests. The test scores are combined with other relevant data to create school and district accountability scores, which serve as a means of measuring educational quality and improvement in educational programs over time.

This document is part of a series of materials meant to promote understanding of the knowledge and skills students must have and the kinds of work they must produce to be successful on the LEAP. Other documents providing background and further information on the LEAP tests can be found on the Louisiana Department of Education Web site at www.louisianaschools.net.

LEAP Reports

Louisiana's grade 8 students are tested each year in the spring. Individual student, school, district, and state test results are released in phases in May and July. School and district accountability results are reported in the fall.

For LEAP, student scores are reported at five achievement levels: *Advanced*, *Mastery*, *Basic*, *Approaching Basic*, and *Unsatisfactory*. The percentage of students scoring at each level is reported for individual schools, districts, and the state. General definitions for achievement levels are given on page 2. Achievement level descriptors for all content areas can be found on the Louisiana Department of Education Web site at www.louisianaschools.net. Click on Testing at the top of the page and then on Achievement Level Descriptors in the drop-down menu under LEAP.

LEAP

General Achievement Level Definitions

Achievement Level	Definition
Advanced	A student at this level has demonstrated superior performance beyond the level of mastery.
Mastery	A student at this level has demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter and is well prepared for the next level of schooling.
Basic	A student at this level has demonstrated only the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.
Approaching Basic	A student at this level has only partially demonstrated the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.
Unsatisfactory	A student at this level has not demonstrated the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.

Purpose of This Document

This document presents student work in a Social Studies test, which was completed for a LEAP assessment. The document includes multiple-choice and constructed-response items that exemplify what students scoring at specified achievement levels should know and be able to do. A discussion of each item highlights the knowledge and skills it is intended to measure.

As you review the items, it is important to remember that a student's achievement level is based on his or her total test score (cumulative score for all questions in the test) in a content area, not on one particular item or section, and that sample items represent a small portion of the body of knowledge and skills measured by the LEAP tests.

Social Studies

The grade 8 LEAP Social Studies test is composed of sixty multiple-choice and four constructed-response items. A student earns 1 point for each correct answer to a multiple-choice item and from 0 to 4 points for the answer and work shown for each constructed-response item.

The general scoring rubric for constructed-response items is:

Score	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student's response demonstrates in-depth understanding of the relevant content and/or procedures. The student completes all important components of the task accurately and communicates ideas effectively. Where appropriate, the student offers insightful interpretations and/or extensions. Where appropriate, the student uses more sophisticated reasoning and/or efficient procedures.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student completes most important aspects of the task accurately and communicates clearly. The student's response demonstrates an understanding of major concepts and/or processes, although less important ideas or details may be overlooked or misunderstood. The student's logic and reasoning may contain minor flaws.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student completes some parts of the task successfully. The student's response demonstrates gaps in conceptual understanding.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student completes only a small portion of the task and/or shows minimal understanding of the concepts and/or processes.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student's response is incorrect, irrelevant, too brief to evaluate, or blank.

It is important to recognize that score points for constructed-response items and LEAP achievement levels do not share a one-to-one correspondence. For example, it should not be assumed that a student who scores at the *Advanced* level in the assessment has earned a score of 4 on each constructed-response item.

It is possible for a grade 8 student to earn a total of 76 points on the LEAP Social Studies test. The number of raw score points a student would have to achieve to reach each achievement level may change slightly from year to year given the difficulty of that particular form of the test. The spring 2008 raw score range for each achievement level is shown on page 4.

Spring 2008 Social Studies Test, Grade 8

Achievement Level	Raw Score Range
Advanced	69 – 76 points
Mastery	60 – 68 points
Basic	42 – 59 points
Approaching Basic	30 – 41 points
Unsatisfactory	0 – 29 points

The following section of this document presents four multiple-choice items, one from each of the four social studies strands—**Civics, History, Economics,** and **Geography**. The items were selected because they illustrate results from four of the five achievement levels used to report LEAP results—*Advanced, Mastery, Basic,* and *Approaching Basic*. Examples of *Unsatisfactory* work are not included; by definition, work classified as *Unsatisfactory* exhibits a narrower range of knowledge and skills than work classified as *Approaching Basic*. In addition, one constructed-response item with its scoring rubric and sample student responses at score points 0 to 4 is included. For this item, each student response is annotated to explain how the score was derived and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the response. Information shown for each item includes

- the correct answer,
- the achievement level or score point,
- the strand and benchmark each item measures, and
- commentary on the skills/knowledge measured by the item.

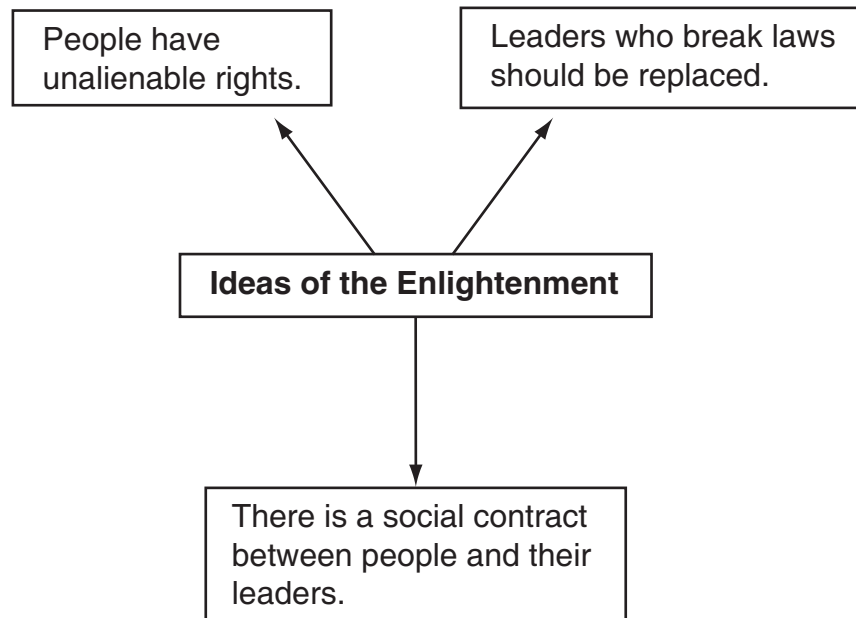
Grade 8—Social Studies Multiple-Choice Items

Strand: History

Benchmark H-1B-M8: Relating the institutions and practices of government established during and after the American Revolution to the foundation of the American political system

Achievement Level: *Advanced*

Use the diagram below to answer question XX.



The ideas in this diagram were first reflected in which American document?

- A. the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut
- B. the Mayflower Compact
- * C. the Declaration of Independence
- D. the Articles of Confederation

* correct answer

This History item would most likely be answered correctly by students who score at the *Advanced* level. The item requires students to connect ideas of the Enlightenment with the early American document that adopted them. Students who answer this item correctly can identify specific ideas in early American documents and distinguish differences between the documents. Students who

choose option A or option B have identified early American documents but are unable to accurately identify the document that contains all the ideas shown. Students who choose option D have again identified an early American document that contains ideas similar to those shown but have inaccurately identified the **first** American document to reflect those ideas. Students who choose option C are correctly able to associate the ideas shown in the document as all being part of the Declaration of Independence and identify the Declaration of Independence as being the first document listed to contain all of them.

Strand: Geography

Benchmark G-1C-M2: Identifying key demographic concepts and using these concepts to analyze the population characteristics of a country or region

Achievement Level: *Mastery*

Use the table below to answer question XX.

Louisiana Rural and Urban Populations, 1930–1990

Year	Rural Population	Urban Population
1930	1,268,061	833,532
1950	1,211,820	1,471,696
1970	1,219,131	2,422,175
1990	1,348,214	2,871,759

All these factors explain the population trend shown in the table **except**

- A. the growth of the petrochemical industry.
- * B. the expansion of states' rights.
- C. the introduction of agricultural technology.
- D. the expansion of educational opportunities.

* *correct answer*

This Geography item would most likely be answered correctly by students who score at the *Mastery* level and above. The item requires students to read a table containing urban and rural population data and to interpret what could have contributed to the shifts shown. Students who choose option A, C, or D have insufficient knowledge to recognize that all are possible reasons for the rural-to-urban population shift during the time period. Students who choose option B correctly recognize that states' rights would be an unlikely catalyst for this type of population shift and may also recognize that states' rights was not a particularly volatile issue during the time period shown.

Strand: Civics

Benchmark C-1D-M1: Explaining the meaning of citizenship and the requirements for citizenship and naturalization in the United States

Achievement Level: *Basic*

Use the list below to answer question XX.

- eighteen years of age or older
- legal resident in the country for at least five years
- no criminal convictions
- ability to read, write, and speak English

The requirements listed are directly related to

- * A. becoming a United States citizen through naturalization.
- B. obtaining a passport.
- C. registering to vote.
- D. establishing residency in any of the fifty states.

* *correct answer*

This Civics item would most likely be answered correctly by students who score at the *Basic* level and above. The item requires students to determine which civic activity requires all the qualifications listed. Options B and D can be eliminated because none of the items listed are required for obtaining a passport or for establishing residency in the United States. Option C is attractive since one of the requirements for voting is the same as becoming a United States citizen through naturalization—a person must be 18 years of age or older. However, option C can be dismissed since a person must already be a United States citizen to register to vote. Students who choose option A have sufficient knowledge to correctly identify that all the qualifications listed are directly required for citizenship through naturalization.

Strand: Economics

Benchmark E-1A-M5: Giving examples of how skills and knowledge increase productivity and career opportunities

Achievement Level: ***Approaching Basic***

Use the information below to answer question XX.

TRAINEES WANTED

Branch Manager Trainee

Large commercial bank seeking qualified individuals for training program. Experience as a loan officer preferred. Upon completion of program, successful graduates will be assigned to a branch in the tri-parish area.

Education: bachelor's degree required

Starting Salary: \$25,000–\$30,000

A successful candidate for the job would **most likely** have a background in

- A. physical science.
- B. art and the humanities.
- C. political science.
- * D. business and economics.

* correct answer

This Economics item would most likely be answered correctly by students who score at the *Approaching Basic* level and above. The item requires students to read an employment advertisement and identify the most appropriate candidate for the position. For this item, students must consider what skills would be necessary for a branch manager of a bank. Through careful reading, students must recognize the clue that helps determine which background is most fitting: the preference that the candidate have “experience as a loan officer.” The most likely background that would cause a candidate to be successful then, would be one that involved finances (which applies to the work of a loan officer as well as a bank manager). Options A, B, and C are plausible choices, but not the most likely ones. Option A, physical science, mainly provides experience within the fields of physics and chemistry. Option B, art and the humanities, would likely provide a background in fields such as music and literature. Option C, political science, deals primarily with the structure, history, and workings of government. This leaves option D, business and economics, as the only field that specifically relates to working with money, and therefore, the most likely background of a successful candidate for branch manager.

Grade 8—Social Studies Constructed-Response Item

A social studies constructed-response item for a LEAP test may require students to write an extended answer in response to a question, direction, or other prompt. Frequently, constructed-response items have multiple parts. In addition to writing, students may be asked to work with graphics or other stimulus materials.

The item, scoring rubric, and sample student responses at each score point (0 to 4) are annotated to explain how each score was derived and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each response.

Strand: History

Benchmark H-1A-M5: Identifying issues and problems from the past and evaluating alternative courses of action

Abraham Lincoln took office as president of the United States in March 1861. In his inaugural address, he spoke of the regional conflict dividing the nation.

I believe that the Union of these states is forever. No government ever had a law to bring about its own end. Continue to follow all the laws of the Constitution, and the Union will last forever.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended. The other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only real dispute . . .

In your hands, my countrymen, is the important issue of civil war. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the ones ready to attack. You have no reason to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn oath to “preserve, protect, and defend” it.

- A. Who were the “countrymen” to whom Lincoln was talking in this speech?
- B. Identify one main issue that separated **both** sides and explain what **each** side believed in regard to this issue.
- C. In his speech, Lincoln declared his hope that civil war could be avoided. By April, the war had started. Explain why.

Scoring Rubric

Score	Description
4	<p>The student's response correctly identifies "countrymen" in part A, accurately identifies and explains one main issue that separated <u>both</u> sides in part B, and explains why the Civil War started in part C.</p> <p>The student completes all important components of the task accurately and communicates ideas effectively. The response demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the relevant content and contains sophisticated reasoning.</p>
3	<p>The student's response provides a total of three correct answers to parts A, B, and/or C.</p> <p>The response demonstrates a general understanding of major concepts, although less important ideas or details may be overlooked or misunderstood. The student's logic and reasoning may contain minor inaccuracies.</p>
2	<p>The student's response provides a total of two correct answers to parts A, B, and/or C.</p> <p>The student completes some part of the task successfully, but the response is limited and demonstrates gaps in conceptual understanding.</p>
1	<p>The student's response provides a total of only one correct answer to parts A, B, and/or C.</p> <p>The student completes only a small portion of the task and shows a minimal understanding of the concept. The student's response may contain major inaccuracies and gaps in logic and reasoning.</p>
0	<p>Response is incorrect, irrelevant, too brief to evaluate, or blank.</p>

Scoring Information: Response may include, but should not be limited to, the following:

Maximum points to be awarded per section: part A—one pt, part B—two pts, part C—one pt

*Note: Merely identifying a main issue does not earn a student points in part B; the response must explain the beliefs of each side regarding the issue to earn full credit.

Part A The student correctly identifies "countrymen."

"Countrymen" refers to secessionists, states in rebellion, southern states, southerners, etc.

Part B The student identifies one main issue that separated both sides *and* explains what each side believed in regard to that issue.

- Slavery—The North was against slavery or the spread of slavery to the territories. The South was in favor of maintaining slavery and/or the spreading of slavery to the territories.
- States' rights—The North believed that all states were members of the Union and the government made laws that the states had to follow. The South believed in states' rights, where the individual state could decide whether or not it wanted to follow a law.

Part C The student explains why the Civil War started.

- Southerners believed Lincoln's election as president made war inevitable.
- Failure of all compromises previously reached between North and South
- Deep emotional hostility between the North and the South
- Two totally different ways of life (slave-owning, agriculture-based South versus an increasingly antislavery, industrial North)
- Secession of South Carolina from the Union and establishment of the Confederate States of America
- Confederate forces attacked a U.S. military installation in Fort Sumter.

Score Point 4

Abraham Lincoln took office as president of the United States in March 1861. In his inaugural address, he spoke of the regional conflict dividing the nation.

I believe that the Union of these states is forever. No government ever had a law to bring about its own end. Continue to follow all the laws of the Constitution, and the Union will last forever.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended. The other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only real dispute . . .

In your hands, my countrymen, is the important issue of civil war. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the ones ready to attack. You have no reason to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn oath to “preserve, protect, and defend” it.

- A. Who were the “countrymen” to whom Lincoln was talking in this speech?

He was talking to the Southern men.

- B. Identify one main issue that separated **both** sides and explain what **each** side believed in regard to this issue.

The North did not believe in slavery because they thought it was immortally wrong, but they were raised around industry. The South believed in slavery because it was their way of life since they were raised around agriculture.

- C. In his speech, Lincoln declared his hope that civil war could be avoided. By April the war had started. Explain why.

Lincoln became president, South Carolina seceded, and the other southern states followed and the war began.

This student provides accurate and complete answers to all four parts of the question. Part A correctly identifies the “countrymen” Lincoln was addressing (“Southern men”). Part B identifies slavery as the main issue that separated the North and the South and explains what each side generally believed: the more industrialized North thought slavery was immoral, while the South believed it was necessary to its agricultural way of life. Part C correctly lays out a sequence of events that led to the war. Overall, the response communicates ideas effectively and demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the content.

Score Point 3

Abraham Lincoln took office as president of the United States in March 1861. In his inaugural address, he spoke of the regional conflict dividing the nation.

I believe that the Union of these states is forever. No government ever had a law to bring about its own end. Continue to follow all the laws of the Constitution, and the Union will last forever.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended. The other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only real dispute . . .

In your hands, my countrymen, is the important issue of civil war. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the ones ready to attack. You have no reason to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn oath to “preserve, protect, and defend” it.

- A. Who were the “countrymen” to whom Lincoln was talking in this speech?

He was talking to the people of the nation

- B. Identify one main issue that separated **both** sides and explain what **each** side believed in regard to this issue.

The main issue that separated the United States was the issue of slavery. The people in the North believed that slavery was wrong and should be abolished. Southerners, however, believed that slavery was essential to their economic growth. Slaves were used on plantations

- C. In his speech, Lincoln declared his hope that civil war could be avoided. By April the war had started. Explain why.

The war started because the southern states knew Lincoln was opposed to slavery, so they seceded soon after his inauguration.

This student provides three generally correct answers. Part A does not receive credit, because the “countrymen” Lincoln was addressing were specifically the secessionists, states in rebellion, southern states, etc., not “the people of the nation” as a whole. Part B receives full credit because it identifies slavery as a main issue that separated the two sides and explains what each side believed regarding slavery. Part C receives credit for stating a reason the war started.

Score Point 2

Abraham Lincoln took office as president of the United States in March 1861. In his inaugural address, he spoke of the regional conflict dividing the nation.

I believe that the Union of these states is forever. No government ever had a law to bring about its own end. Continue to follow all the laws of the Constitution, and the Union will last forever.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended. The other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only real dispute . . .

In your hands, my countrymen, is the important issue of civil war. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the ones ready to attack. You have no reason to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn oath to “preserve, protect, and defend” it.

- A. Who were the “countrymen” to whom Lincoln was talking in this speech?

The citizens of the United States of America.

- B. Identify one main issue that separated **both** sides and explain what **each** side believed in regard to this issue.

An issue that separated the union and the confederacy was slavery.
The Union believed slavery was wrong and shouldn't be extended.
The Confederacy believed slavery was right, and ought to
be extended

- C. In his speech, Lincoln declared his hope that civil war could be avoided. By April the war had started. Explain why.

This student completed only two parts of the task successfully. Part C was not attempted and part A is incorrect, so neither receives credit. Part B, however, receives full credit (2 points) for accurately identifying slavery as an issue and explaining each side’s beliefs regarding the issue. Overall, the response exhibits a limited understanding of the content.

Score Point 1

Abraham Lincoln took office as president of the United States in March 1861. In his inaugural address, he spoke of the regional conflict dividing the nation.

I believe that the Union of these states is forever. No government ever had a law to bring about its own end. Continue to follow all the laws of the Constitution, and the Union will last forever.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended. The other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only real dispute . . .

In your hands, my countrymen, is the important issue of civil war. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the ones ready to attack. You have no reason to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn oath to “preserve, protect, and defend” it.

- A. Who were the “countrymen” to whom Lincoln was talking in this speech?

The army

- B. Identify one main issue that separated **both** sides and explain what **each** side believed in regard to this issue.

- C. In his speech, Lincoln declared his hope that civil war could be avoided. By April the war had started. Explain why.

Be cause the south bombed the fort Sumter

This student provides only one correct answer. Part B is unanswered and part A is incorrect. Part C receives credit for stating “the south bombed the [F]ort Sumter” as the reason the war started. This response demonstrates minimal understanding of the concept.

Score Point 0

Abraham Lincoln took office as president of the United States in March 1861. In his inaugural address, he spoke of the regional conflict dividing the nation.

I believe that the Union of these states is forever. No government ever had a law to bring about its own end. Continue to follow all the laws of the Constitution, and the Union will last forever.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended. The other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only real dispute . . .

In your hands, my countrymen, is the important issue of civil war. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the ones ready to attack. You have no reason to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn oath to “preserve, protect, and defend” it.

- A. Who were the “countrymen” to whom Lincoln was talking in this speech?

the united States of America

- B. Identify one main issue that separated **both** sides and explain what **each** side believed in regard to this issue.

both sides actually had their own beliefs about it.

- C. In his speech, Lincoln declared his hope that civil war could be avoided. By April the war had started. Explain why.

The war started because his speech wasn't good enough.

There is no correct or relevant information provided in any part of this response.



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